

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

NIC-01 EUR-25 OMB-01 RSR-01 /118 W
----- 047516

R 120252 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4908
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 1485

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NP, PFOR, SK, IN, CH, UR
SUBJECT: DISTURBANCES IN SIKKIM: NEPALESE VIEWS, PLUS AN ISOLATED CHINESE ONE.

1. SUMMARY. OFFICIAL GON REACTION TO SIKKIM DISTURBANCES HAS PREDICTABLY BEEN TO SAY NOTHING AT ALL. HOWEVER, DURING RELAXED SOCIAL OCCASION APRIL 10, FOUR MIDDLE- RANKING FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS EXHIBITED INTENSE INTEREST IN POSITION OF GREAT POWERS AND CHINA ON ISSUE, PLUS FEELING OF FRATERNAL SYMPATHY FOR NEPALI MAJORITY IN SIKKIM. PRC EMBASSY ECON COUNSELOR INDICATED DURING CONVERSATION THAT HE FELT ALL NATIONS, LARGE AND SMALL, SHOULD HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS AND THAT SIKKIM WAS A NATION IN THIS SENSE. END SUMMARY.

2. THERE IS NO OFFICIAL INDICATION OF GON ATTITUDE TOWARD SIKKIM DISTURBANCES THAT WE HAVE NOTICED; INDEED, SEMI- OFFICIAL LOCAL PRESS HAS CARRIED STRAIGHT NEWS ACCOUNTS BUT NO EDITORIAL REACTION. THIS IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND PREDICTABLE NEPALESE REACTION TO SITUATION IN WHICH ANYTHING GON MIGHT SAY WOULD BE LIKELY TO OFFEND ONE OR ANOTHER NEIGHBOR.

3 . I ATTENDED DINNER PARTY BY FRG FIRST SECRETARY APRIL 10 AND FOUND MYSELF WITH FOUR MIDDLE- RANKING NEPALESE DIPLOMATS, ALL CURRENTLY WORKING IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, PLUS CHINESE ECONOMIC

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COUNSELOR, HSU LIANG, AND HIS INTERPRETER, AND OTHER DIPLOMATS FROM FRG, BURMESE AND FRENCH EMBASSIES. NEPALESE LAUNCHED ACTIVE AND APPARENTLY WELL-INFORMED DISCUSSION OF CURRENT SITUATION IN SIKKIM. THEY REVIEWED EXISTING TREATY SITUATION AND SPECULATED THAT NEPALI MAJORITY HOPED THROUGH CURRENT AGITATION TO GET GOI TO ELIMINATE CHOGYAL, OR AT LEAST TO ELIMINATE ALL HIS REAL POWER. ULTIMATELY, MY INFORMANTS THOUGHT, NEPALI MAJORITY IN SIKKIM HOPED ALSO TO GET MEASURE OF INDEPENDENCE FROM INDIA-- ALTHOUGH ONE OF THEM ASKED RHETORICALLY, ONCE YOU LET THE GOI IN, HOW DO YOU GET IT OUT? THROUGHOUT ALL THIS DISCUSSION I DETECTED SOME SYMPATHY FOR NEPALESE MAJORITY IN SIKKIM BASED ON FRATERNAL CONSIDERATIONS OF ORIGIN AND LANGUAGE, BUT NOT THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION OF ANY INTEREST IN A SOLUTION TO PROBLEM THAT WOULD INVOLVE MERGER WITH NEPAL. EVEN MORE CONSPICUOUS THAN FRATERNAL SYMPATHY, HOWEVER, WAS APPARENT FASCINATION OF ALL FOUR OF NEPALESE DIPLOMATS WITH POSITIONS GREAT POWERS AND PARTICULARLY CHINA WERE TAKING TOWARD SIKKIMESE SITUATION. THEIR CONCERN APPEARED TO CENTER ON IMPLICATIONS FOR NEPAL AND OTHER SMALL COUNTRIES IN AREA POSED BY INDIAN INVOLVEMENT. THERE WERE FREQUENT, ONLY HALF-JOKING PARALLELS DRAWN TO BANGLADESH.

4. AFTER REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO GET ME TO DEFINE A POSITIVE US INTEREST (WHICH I DECLINED), IT BECAME THE PRC'S COUNSELOR'S TURN TO STATE HIS COUNTRY'S POSITION. AT FIRST HE SAID HE WOULD NOT COMMENT AS HE HAD NOT HEARD RADIO PEKING ON THE SUBJECT. WHEN PRESSED, HOWEVER, HE SAID ALL COUNTRIES, GREAT AND SMALL, SHOULD HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. ON FURTHER INQUIRY HE SAID HE THOUGHT SIKKIM WAS A COUNTRY IN THAT SENSE.

5. AFTER CHINESE LEFT THE GROUP, MY REMAINING DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES APPEARED INTRIGUED AT WHAT CHINESE COUNSELOR HAD SAID. BURMESE CHARGE IN PARTICULAR TOLD ME HE BELIEVED COUNSELOR WAS VERY CLOSE TO AMBASSADOR TSAO CHIH AND WOULD NOT HAVE MADE STATEMENT HE DID WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION. I AM NOT SO SURE. HOWEVER, SINCE THERE SEEMS TO BE A DEARTH OF EVIDENCE AT THIS POINT REGARDING CHINESE ATTITUDES, I AM REPORTING FOREGOING AS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST. (SEE NEW DELHI'S 4127, PARA 2.)

6. THE NEPALESE WERE ALSO ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN SOVIET VIEWS AND REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO INDO-SOVIET TREATY OF 1971, ASSERTING THAT INDIA WOULD NOT "SWALLOW" SIKKIM WITHOUT A "GREEN LIGHT"

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FROM THE SOVIETS.
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